of India with the Government of Russian Federation. The issue was discussed by the External Affairs Minister with the Foreign Minister of Russia Federation H.E. Sergei V. Lavrov in October 2004 during his visit to New Delhi.

(c) and (d) Discussions on the issue between the two governments are continuing.

India-Nepal discussion on mutual interest

3762. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently, India and Nepal have discussed security-related issues of mutual interest;

(b) whether any final outcome was there; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when the outcome is expected to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) There is a regular dialogue between India and Nepal at various levels on issues of mutual concern and interest including security related issues. A network of institutional mechanisms comprising Home Secretary-level talks, Joint Working Group on Border Management, Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues and District Coordination Committees has been evolved to jointly address various security related issues including maintenance of peace and security and prevention of criminal activities in the India-Nepal border areas. The two sides have also finalised the texts of a new Extradition Treaty and an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. Conclusion of these agreements will strengthen the bilateral legal framework for security cooperation.

Hosting of conference on federalism based federal system by India

†3763. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have offered to host the conference on federalism based federal system to be held in 2007/08;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the participating countries in the proposed conference; and

(c) whether participating countries have agreed upon or likely to be agreed regarding housing of the same by India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At the Third International Conference on Federalism held in Brussels on 3-5 March 2005, MOS (PMO) had announced the Government of India's offer to host the Fourth International Conference on Federalism in 2007-08. Going by the last Conference, more than 500 participants from 60 countries are expected to participate in the next conference also.

(c) Modalities are being firmed up by the Inter-State Council Secrearíat in consultation with the organizing body, The Forum of Federation, which is studying India's offer.

Opening of Hussainiwala Indo-Pak border

3764. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken up the matter with Pakistan to open the Hussainiwala Indo-Pak border in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNALAFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) to (c) It is the policy of the Government of India to promote trade and economic relations with Pakistan and encourage people to people contacts between the two countries.

In keeping with this policy, during the visit of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf to India from 16 to 18 April 2005, agreements were reached to start early a bus service between Amritsar and Lahore and to religious places such as Nankana Sahib; and to-re-establish the Khokhrapar-Munnabao route by 1st January, 2006.

The Government would examine other routes after the implementation of the routes currently in pipeline.